

**MetroWest
Center For
Independent Living**

People with Disabilities Living in the Community

July 2015



WE WON!

The Conference Committee FY '16 Budget, chaired by Representative Brian Dempsey and Senator Karen Spilka, contained increases in our three Independent Living priorities.

- \$584,450 increase in 4120-2000 from FY '15.
- Alternative Housing Voucher Program (line item 7004-9030), rental assistance for low-income single adults with disabilities under age 60, was increased by \$1,050,000 to a total of \$4,600,000.
- Assistive technology and the REquipment Program received \$500,000.

The governor has 10 days to approve or modify this budget. We trust he will do the right thing!

Sincerely,

Paul W. Spooner, Executive Director



In This Issue

- ACA
- Fair Housing
- Clinicians Anti-trust
- ADA 25
- Boston 2024

MWCIL



**MetroWest Center
for Independent
Living**

Website: www.mwcil.org

Email: info@mwcil.org

Phone: (508)875-7853

Address: 280 Irving
Street
Framingham, MA 01702

Mass Audubon's Accessible Trails Project and the ADA



Massachusetts has experienced many changes in the 25 years since the ADA. While we wish the changes were faster and more pervasive, the ADA has brought improved accessibility on many fronts.

These pictures are from the All-Person's trail at Broadmoor in Natick. Mass Audubon recently improved 12 trails across the state using grants and collaborations with other organizations. Also in our service area, Norfolk's Stony Brook Sensory Trail is wheelchair accessible and has a post-and-rope guide for visually impaired visitors. They plan to create a "comprehensive guidelines manual for developing and sustaining an accessible interpreted trail". We hope these guidelines will be used by local communities who are creating and improving their own open spaces.

We understand that there are still serious deficiencies in the basics such as housing, transportation, health care and employment. However, you have to appreciate that the ADA has become so mainstream that Nature Centers are adding accessibility.

Visit the [MA Audubon website](#) for more information on their Accessible Trails Project.

[Join Our Mailing List!](#)



Swan family visible from the Broadmoor All-Persons Trail in Natick.

Affordable Care Act

Dan Shannon, Executive Director of the MA Developmental Disability Council, wrote the following piece about the Supreme Court's recent decision on the ACA.



"The Affordable Care Act has three equally important components; it requires insurers to cover all Americans; it requires individuals to buy health insurance; and it provides subsidies to lower-income people to make sure they can afford insurance. In *King vs. Burwell* the challengers argued that the text of the law made one of its key elements ineffective. In a little-noted sentence of the law, the text reads that the subsidies could be made available only in exchanges "established by the state." Although they admitted that all three pieces must be in place to make the law work, the challengers argued that Congress deliberately made the subsidies unavailable on the federal exchanges.

Chief Justice John Roberts, writing for a six-justice majority, argued that by removing one component, subsidies under state insurance

exchanges established by the federal government, the law would descend into a "death spiral." The court held that the challengers were wrong in their contention that the meaning of "established by the state" was clear and deliberate. The court in fact judged that Congress wanted the states to help implement the law. Congress did not intend to give states the power to veto it. Looking at the law in context, and noting that it makes subsidies available on all exchanges, state and federal, the court asked why Congress would risk total destruction of the ACA just to encourage states to create their own exchanges, especially when Congress itself provided a federal backup plan.

The decision doesn't just prevent losing the ACA but it actually makes it stronger. The government argued that when a statute is ambiguous, the responsible government agency (in this case the IRS) gets to interpret it. The IRS had interpreted that the subsidies would apply to all states regardless of whether the exchange was state or federal. But the court held that the IRS does not get to decide, but rather the ACA requires that the government provide subsidies in all exchanges, period. That means that neither the IRS or any future president will be able to decide otherwise. The court essentially provided one more layer of protection against the ACA's opponents."

Fair Housing Act

On Friday, June 26, The U.S. Supreme Court ruled that housing discrimination does not have to be deliberate to be illegal. A plaintiff does not have to demonstrate that a policy was intentionally discriminatory, only that the results were discriminatory.

FYI: The Fair Housing Act covers discrimination because of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, **disability** and the presence of children.

The next question is - can discrimination against people in wheelchairs be proven based on the amount of accessible or visitable housing that is built? Could this ruling benefit people with disabilities?

[Click Here](#) for a NY Times report on the decision.

Clinicians Anti-Trust Bill

Our colleague, Liz Casey, has asked that we bring Senate Bill 649 to your attention. The intentions of the bill, introduced by Senator Dan Wolf, are to improve policies for mental health services and confront limitations imposed by insurance committees.

Bill 649 is currently in hearings. If you agree with the bill, please contact your senator.

[Download the details from CliniciansUNITED.](#)

You're Invited!

25th Anniversary Celebration of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

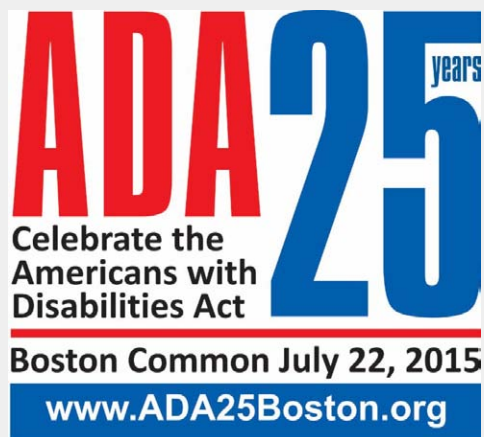
When:

Wednesday, July 22 from 11 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Where:

Boston Common

[Click Here for More Info](#)



Boston 2024

The Boston application for the 2024 Olympics is also for the Paralympics. The [Boston 2024 FAQ page](#) addresses accessibility in Question 12:

12. What accommodations will be made

so that Paralympic athletes and spectators with disabilities can easily access all venues? Will there be improvements in accessibility in Boston as a result of the Games?

"Boston 2024 is committed to a fully accessible Olympic and Paralympic Games for all athletes and spectators, and the Games will be a catalyst for improved accessibility in Boston. Any and all new construction will be accessible to people with disabilities as required by federal and state law. Accessibility will also be a key consideration in the construction of any new transit facilities. Boston 2024 is also excited by the possibility of partnering with local experts on accessibility in the Boston area such as the Institute for Human Centered Design. Boston 2024 believes that a focus on accessibility in venues for the Olympic Games will provide for a more seamless transition to the Paralympic Games, reducing the time between the two events and ultimately enhancing the attention on and attendance at the Paralympic Games. "

"

[Fox 25](#) recently interviewed Boston 2024 member and Paralympian, Dr. Cheri Blauwet. With 7 medals from 3 cities, Blauwet is an expert in venues. *"The Paralympic Games, Blauwet says, reduces stigma by raising awareness to the talents of athletes with disabilities. They also force host cities to step up accessibility for all. "We can use this catalyst, this sort of deadline in many ways to think about our accessibility infrastructure," she said. "Making our community more open to not only wheel chair users but anyone that might have varying levels of mobility." Blauwet added that the city isn't perfect, and has an older infrastructure, but said "nothing works like a deadline" to get improvements moving."*

We applaud the 2024 Committee for working with the Institute of Human Centered Design, and for their commitment to accessibility. The Paralympics may be the catalyst that brings support from the Disability Community

Paris is another city in contention. French Paralympians and people with disabilities are backing up the efforts for "Paris 2024". Read about the Paris bid at [InsideTheGames.biz](#).
"Emmanuelle Assmann, President of the French Paralympic Committee (CPSF) said: "Bringing the

Olympic and Paralympic Games to Paris would have a huge positive impact on the lives of disabled people in the city."

CLW's 40th Anniversary Celebration

The Center for Living and Working, Inc., is even older than the ADA. Join their celebration!

When:

Saturday, July 25, 4 p.m. - 7 p.m.

Where:

Union Station
Worcester

Contact:

(508) 755-1121
opsearch@centerlw.org

The video "Lives Worth Living" will be shown at 4 p.m. A DJ, dancing, a magician, light food and refreshments are also planned!

CART and ASL Interpreters will be available. Call or email for reasonable accommodation requests.



Got News?

Send us your ideas!

This monthly section is for news and comments from our readers. You can suggest something for us to research, give your opinion on a topic (relevant to people with disabilities of course), or let us know of what is working and what needs improvement in the community. Please email Sue at srorke@mw cil.org.

Thanks!

www.mw cil.org

MetroWest Center for Independent Living
280 Irving Street

Framingham, Massachusetts 01702
(508) 875-7853

Copyright © 2014. All Rights Reserved.

[Forward this email](#)



This email was sent to srorke@mwciil.org by srorke@mwciil.org | [Update Profile/Email Address](#) | Rapid removal with [SafeUnsubscribe™](#) | [Privacy Policy](#).



MetroWest Center for Independent Living | 280 Irving Street | Framingham | MA | 01702